

Roads to Resources: Western Access Project - Phase 1

FY2011 Request: \$1,000,000

Reference No: 48781

AP/AL: Allocation

Project Type: Construction

Category: Transportation

Location: Northwest Alaska

Contact: Frank Richards

House District: North/West Areawide (HD 39-40)

Contact Phone: (907)465-3900

Estimated Project Dates: 07/01/2010 - 06/30/2015

Appropriation: Roads to Resources

Brief Summary and Statement of Need:

This project will initiate detailed engineering and environmental analysis needed for refinement and final surface route selection from Interior Alaska to Western Alaska. This project will enhance the viability of communities along the route by reducing costs for freight and passenger traffic and through employment in development of newly accessible resources. This project contributes to the Department's Mission by improving the mobility of people and goods.

Funding:	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	Total
Gen Fund	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000					\$3,000,000
Total:	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000,000

<input type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Going
0% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

Operating & Maintenance Costs:

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
Totals:	0	0

Additional Information / Prior Funding History:

This project was previously funded under the Roads to Resources program.

Project Description/Justification:

This project initiates the detailed analysis needed to confirm and refine the recommended alternative identified in the Western Alaska Access Planning Study that is now being concluded. The planning study examined numerous potential corridors, evaluating resource development and community benefits. The planning study recommends a route that extends the Elliott Highway north of Fairbanks to Tanana and generally follows the Yukon River before connecting to the Nome-Council Road. However, before a final alignment can be established a significant amount of detailed engineering and field work is needed including: wetlands, historic and cultural sites, fish and wildlife habitat, surface and subsurface geology, subsistence and land management issues, advanced mapping, aerial photography, and increased public input and formal consultation with communities and tribal governments.

This work is needed to prepare for the development of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that this project is expected require. Numerous issues may trigger the need for an EIS, including the involvement of wetlands, major river crossing and crossing of federal lands.